

United States Indian Service  
Laborer's Cottage  
Lame Deer  
Rosebud County  
Montana

HABS No. MT-44

HABS  
MONT,  
44 LADE,  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS  
MONT,  
44-LADE,  
1-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

United States Indian Service Laborer's Cottage

Location: Within the town of Lame Deer, Montana,  
the east agency addition. (See Pgs. 7 & 8).  
  
United States Geological Survey, Quad,  
Jimtown, Montana

Date of Construction: 1915  
The front porch, back porch, and south  
addition construction dates are unknown.

Present Owner: Northern Cheyenne Tribe, Inc.  
P.O. Box 128  
Lame Deer, Montana 59043

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The structure dates to the early years of  
this century, when the United States Indian  
Service proceeded on an accelerated accul-  
turation policy on the Northern Cheyenne  
Reservation.

Report Assembled By: Michael Running Wolf, Director  
Resource & Data Department  
Northern Cheyenne Tribe, Inc.  
  
Resource & Data staff members:  
Donita Small  
Joann Sooktis  
Lame Deer, Montana  
August, 1983

## REPORT ON THE UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE LABORER'S COTTAGE

Statement of Significance:

<sup>1</sup>In 1832, an Indian Affairs Bureau was created within the Department of the Interior, with the responsibility of the management of Indian Affairs between the Indian tribes and the U.S. Government. The office has been known as the Indian Bureau, United States Indian Service (U.S.I.S.) and presently as the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

<sup>2</sup>Relations between the U.S. Government, through the Indian Bureau and the Northern Cheyennes began after the signing and ratification by the U.S. Congress of the Ft. Laramie Treaty of 1868. The Northern Cheyennes were designated the Indian Bureau agencies either at: Ft. Randall, Dakota Territory, Medicine Lodge Creek Treaty Agency or the Crow Agency near Otter Creek on the Yellowstone River.

<sup>3</sup>The Indian Bureau agency's responsibilities included: aiding the agricultural efforts of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe; schooling of children; payment of annuities and subsistence to the Northern Cheyenne Tribe as provided by the treaty; census taking; providing services of a physician, teachers, a carpenter, a miller, an engineer, farmers, and blacksmiths; provide a prize of \$50.00 to the 10 best farmers of the year and to in general "civilize" the Northern Cheyennes.

After the turmoil of the war years and the escape of the Northern Cheyennes from Indian Territory in the 1870's, a reservation was made in 1884 on the Rosebud Creek and the Little Bighorn Creek (Little Antelope Creek) in southeastern Montana. <sup>4</sup>The Indian Bureau established a ration distribution center first at Muddy Creek; <sup>5</sup>then in 1886, an agency was built four miles from the mouth of Little Bighorn Creek.

<sup>6</sup>Due to the opposition of the ranchers, homesteaders, Montana State Government, and the indecisiveness of the U.S. Government; the creation of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation was regarded as temporary. <sup>7</sup>As a result, during these years from 1884 to 1900, the Indian Bureau did little on the reservation.

<sup>8</sup>An executive order signed by U.S. President McKinley in 1900 extended the Northern Cheyenne Reservation to the Tongue River. This action brought a sense of permanence for the Northern Cheyennes, because it reaffirmed that this area was "home". Immediately the U.S. Indian Service began an accelerated acculturation program on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation so as to "catch up" with U.S.I.S. acculturation programs on other western Indian reservations.

In the first two decades of the 20th century, <sup>9</sup>the U.S.I.S. made repeated attempts to force the Northern Cheyennes to accept economic, social, and political values of the prevailing culture which had varying degrees of success.

One of the many facets of this accelerated acculturation policy was a building program. Churches, schools, agency buildings, sawmills, roads, corrals, irrigation canals, telephone lines, fences, and bridges were built.

<sup>10</sup>In 1914, a U.S. Government investigation of U.S.I.S. agency superintendent John Eddy revealed the agency building program was unaccomplished despite having employees, machinery and the materials available. The investigation also revealed misuse of U.S.I.S. funds and property. Subsequently, Eddy was fired and replaced by John A. Buntin, who completed the building program.

<sup>11</sup>The U.S. Indian Service Laborer's Cottage was constructed in 1915, as a part of the building program. It was one of four similiar structures built at the Lame Deer Agency. The structure housed U.S.I.S. agency employees.

It has served through the years mainly as a residence. A two bedroom addition, a front and back porch had been added to the original structure. Presently the structure is in a deteriorated state.

### Building Description

The following is a description of the original and the present physical appearance of the U.S.I.S. Laborer's Cottage.

<sup>12</sup>1915 Description - the structure was designated as a laborer's cottage, to house one small family. The structure cost \$850.00 to build in 1915. The facility featured clapboard walls, foundations were not included, a shingle roof, a pine floor, heated by stoves, and lighted by lamps. It lacked water connections, sewage connections, water closets, urinals, wash sinks, wash basins, laundry tubs, showers, tubs, screens, storm sash, screened sleeping porches, burglar alarms, and metal ceilings. The total floor area was 609.5 sq. ft. The dimensions were 29 by 24½ ft. The parlor was 12.5 by 15.5 ft. The dining room was 11 by 12.5 ft. One bedroom was 8.8 by 10.5 ft. The other bedroom was 10 by 10.5 ft. The kitchen was 8 by 10.5 ft.

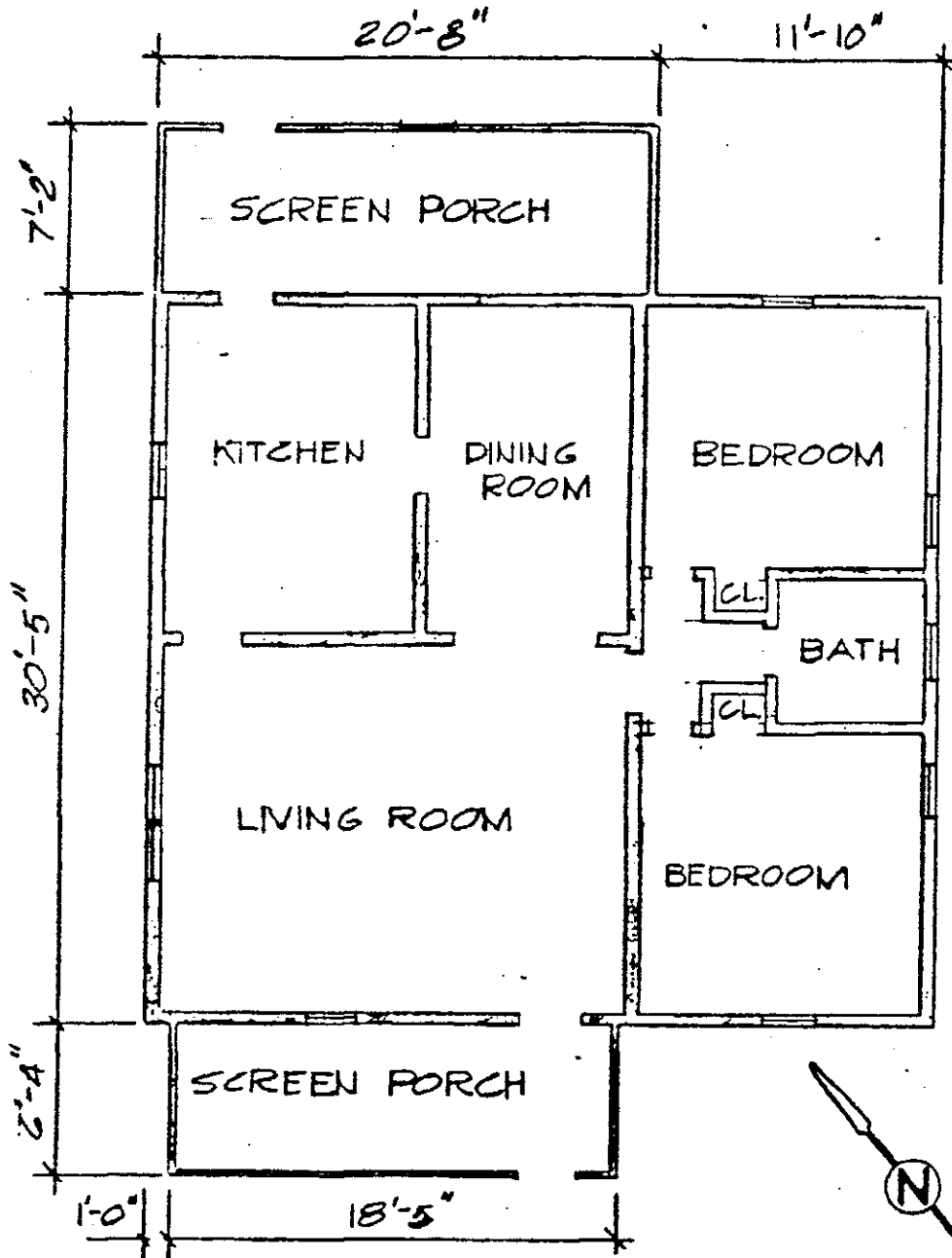
1983 Description - the floor area is 1,253 sq. ft., single story, composition shingle roof, wood shingle exterior walls, concrete and tile floor finish, sheetrock interior walls, rubble stone foundation, no structural ties between the foundation and the wood frame building. Additions: front porch, back porch, and two bedroom addition.

The present condition of the structure is very poor, for example the roof sags because of lack of proper attic ventilation.

The structure will be razed because a proposed Emergency Medical Services structure is to be constructed on the same site.

Footnotes

- (1) Kappler, Charles A., INDIAN AFFAIRS, LAWS AND TREATIES, Vol. 1, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904, P. 1.
- (2) Ibid., PP. 1012, 1013, 1014.
- (3) Ibid., PP. 1012, 1013, 1014.
- (4) Resource & Data Department, Northern Cheyenne Planning Office, "NORTHERN CHEYENNE HISTORY INTERVIEWS", January 13, 1978, Interview with Bessie Elkshoulder.
- (5) Weist, "A HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE PEOPLE", P. 107.
- (6) Pringle, Robert J., "THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE INDIANS IN THE RESERVATION PERIOD", P. 16.
- (7) Historical Research Associates, "TREES OF THE MORNING STAR", P. 13.
- (8) U.S. Department of the Interior, "ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, 1900, INDIAN AFFAIRS", PP. 170, 171.
- (9) Historical Research Associates, "HISTORY, MONTCO", Vol. 20, P. K-17.
- (10) Pringle, Robert J., "THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE INDIANS IN THE RESERVATION PERIOD", PP. 44, 47, 50, 51.
- (11) U.S. Indian Service, "U.S.I.S. LAME DEER AGENCY BUILDINGS INVENTORY, 1915", Montana State Historical Society, Helena, Montana.
- (12) Ibid.



SCALE  $\frac{1}{8}" = 1'-0"$   
GR. SQ. FT. = 1253

U.S.I.S. Laborer's Cottage

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS FIELD TECHNICAL OFFICE LITTLETON, COLO.		
QUARTERS BLDG #78 N. CHEYENNE AGENCY LAME DEER, MONT.		
DRAWN BY: HE	CHECKED BY: <i>(Signature)</i>	
Sheet of	Date:	Dwg.

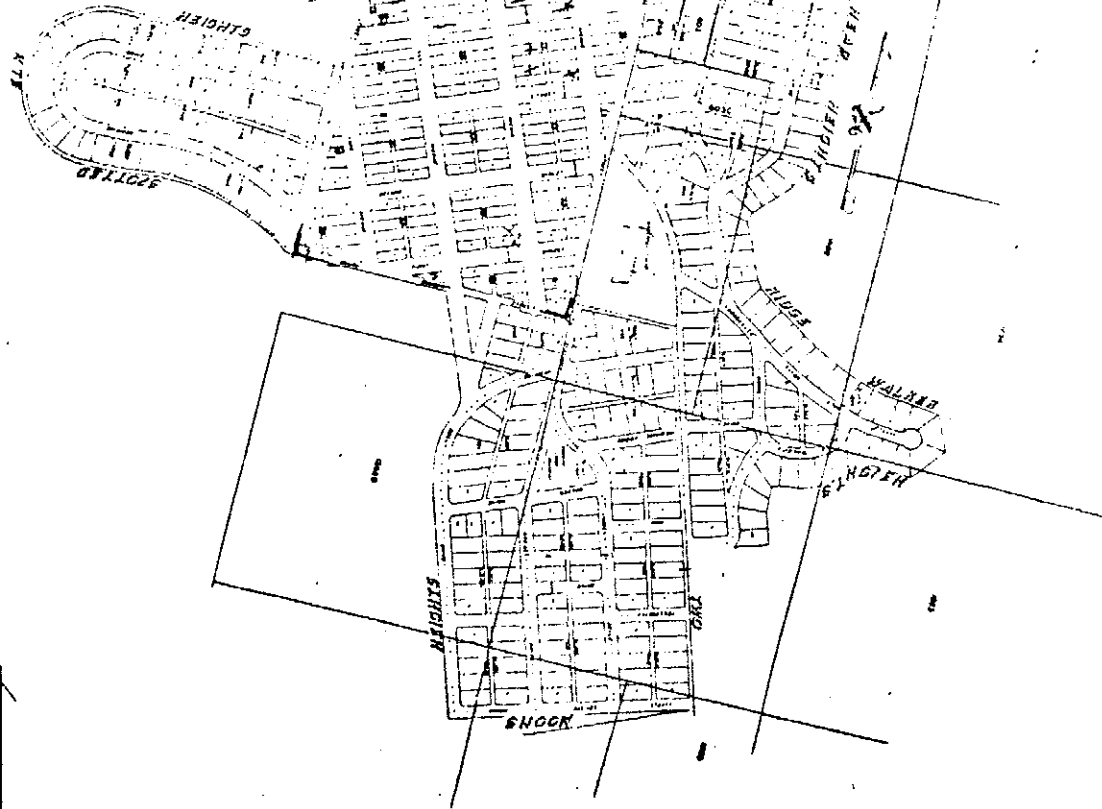
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*Handwritten:*  
K... ..

WEST AGENCY  
ADDITION

EAST AGENCY  
ADDITION

U.S. Indian  
Service  
Laborer's  
Cottage



NAME OF THE BUILDING AND	DATE
PROJECT	03/20/44
SUBDIVISION	



